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# THE ATELIER

JULES BRETON.

CONCLUDED.



HEN the article in the last number of *The Art Amateur* concerning this distinguished Frenchman was written, his autobiography, "La Vie d'un Artiste," had not appeared. Since then it has been published in France, and in it Jules Breton himself recounts his early impressions, his mature judgments, his essays, his mistakes, his triumphs and those of his friends. It is characteristic of the man that his book leaves us but little informed on many points of his life and practice, of which we would willingly know more, but sets before us with great particularity the sayings and doings of all his acquaintances. It teems with anecdotes of his family, his teachers, fellow-pupils and artist friends, and abounds in passages of fine and appreciative criticism of other people's works. Only now and then do we read of his own—generally of his failures. It is all the more useful to us in completing our study of the painter on this account. The dry, external facts having already been given, we can now present in outline a sketch of his inner life, which, as is always the case with an artist, is the more important.

Memories of childhood take up a full third of the volume. Charmingly written, they make us familiar with Breton's father, uncle and brothers; their garden,

with its straight walks and pear-trees and its painted statues of the seasons; with the sensations, the sur-

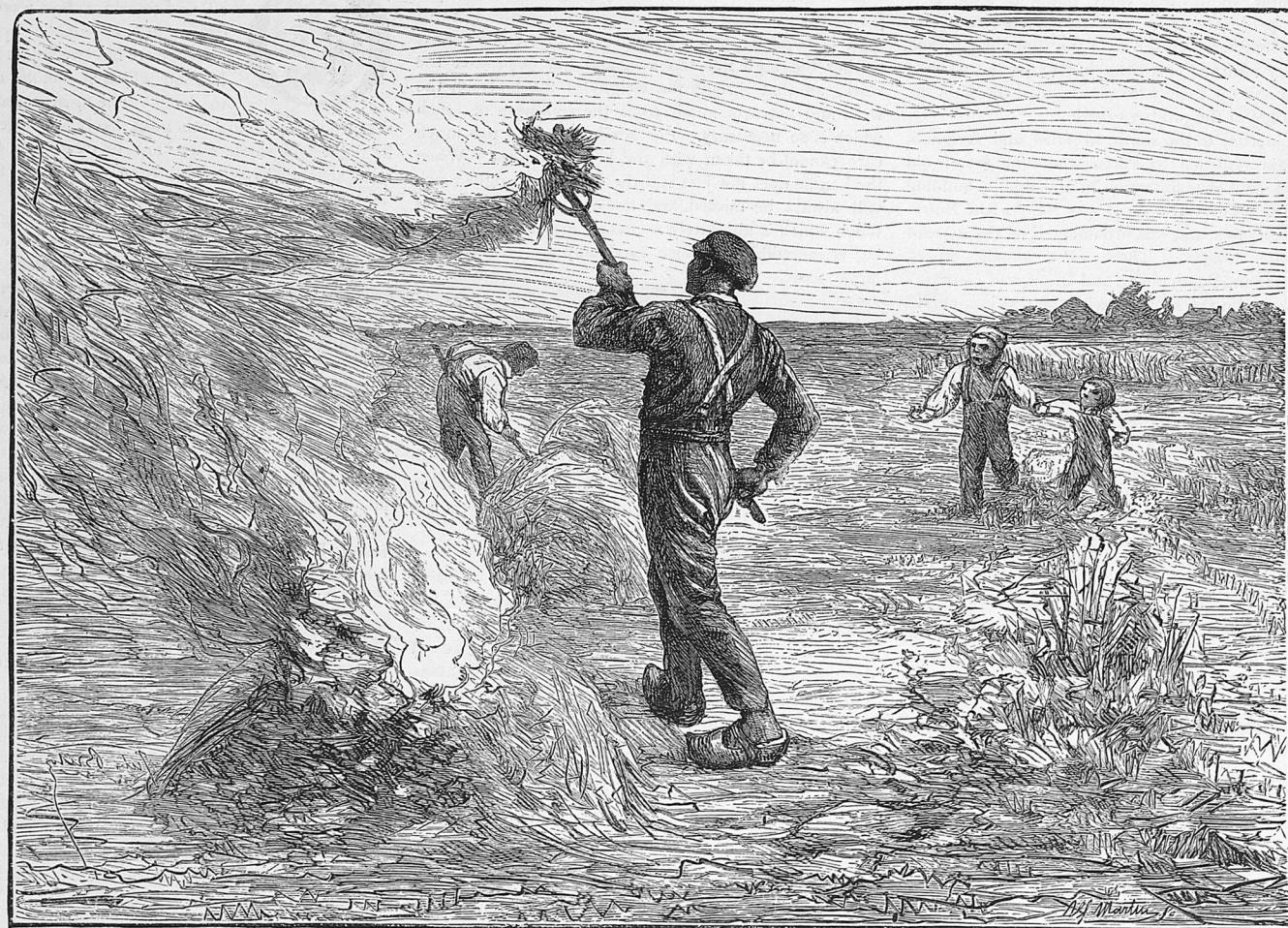


"THE READING." PAINTING BY JULES BRETON.

prises, the imaginings of an impressionable childhood. A house-painter came every year to touch up the deco-

rations of the interior and exterior of the house, and, in particular, the four seasons and a sheet-iron Chinaman who surmounted a small temple on the top of the pigeon turrets. At the sight of his colors the boy determined to be a painter. He and his brother used to tell one another at night the visions which they saw with their eyes open. There is a chapter of amusing folk-tales, told around the fire in winter—of the cobbler who went hunting with his awl and wax and cobbler's knife, and the bells which, on their way to Rome to be blessed, laid Easter eggs in the garden. He recalls the delight which the first sight of a field of Colza in flower gave him; and, indeed, it is evident, throughout the book, that his painter's eye is for landscape mostly, and that his interest in humanity is rather of the literary sort.

We will not again go over the ground of his artistic education. But his remarks on the beginnings of the out-of-doors school of figure painting must be noted in passing. He attributes to the revolution of 1848 the movement which made the workingman and the peasant favorite subjects with artists, and to the necessity of studying them at their avocations in the open street or in the country the origin of all that observation of light and atmosphere which is the strongest point in modern art. It was certainly a long step from the "Roman Orgy," of Couture, and Vernet's "Judith," which he admired in the Salon of 1847, to the Courbets and Millets of 1849. But, as he says, the landscapists had in reality taken the first steps in the new direction. Corot was already Corot in 1847, and Rousseau, Troyon, Diaz and Dupré had laid the foundations of modern landscape. He thinks the influence of Bonington and Constable on these men has been overrated. It was



"BURNING WEEDS." FROM THE PAINTING BY JULES BRETON.

## THE ART AMATEUR.

rather to Hobbema and the Dutch painters that they went to school.

The first whom Breton heard talk of "le plein air" was Eugene Glück, who was full of certain "great spaces of tone without shadow," which he had noticed in certain old tapestries, certain of the Gothic old masters and in pictures of Paul Veronese. These same broad values he had observed in the coloring of objects in the open light of the street, and he preferred such lighting and the unity of effect resulting from it to the confined light of the studio. Breton's first attempt in the new way was unconscious—a study from life of a little gleaner on a flowery bank, near a field of yellow corn. His picture "The Bohemians" had just been finished. He had taken great pains with it, locking himself into his studio and painting his figures from little wax models which he had made, clothed in picturesque rags, grouped and lighted artificially. He was induced to send the "Gleaner" along with it to the Brussels Exhibition of 1852 only, and was surprised to find the open-air study hung on the line, while the elaborate composition was skinned; still more to find himself admitting that the jury had done right in so placing them. The result was that he began the picture of "The Gleaners," before described, and which had so great a success at the Universal Exhibition of 1855.

Courbet's "Burial at Ornans" and Millet's "Sower," both exhibited at the Salon of 1851, had deeply impressed him. But the impression produced by the former picture was one of strength, merely, and the "Sower" was dark, melodramatic, rather an allegory than a bit of nature. Millet's Salon picture of 1853, however, had real peasants in it, creatures with sunburnt and callous skins, with heavy lips, with garments of heavy woollen, bagged at the knees and elbows. His enemies saw in it the glorification of stupidity; the public knew not what to make of it. Breton has a very interesting chapter apropos of it. Baudry's great success in 1867 is made the occasion of another chapter of just and friendly criticism.

The summer of 1857 was passed at Marlotte, on the edge of the forest of Fontainebleau, with Appian, Dauigny and other painters, and the poet, Theodore de Banville. There was no longer any thought but of open-air study. "Each morning we set out for the conquest of a new 'motif,' and there might be seen, as it were, a crop of monstrous mushrooms, our sketching umbrellas rounding themselves in the sunlight." Each evening they returned to a little inn to devour stewed rabbits and nail up their canvases against the wall, the better to judge of the progress made.

After a journey to the south, to Arles and Avignon, Breton again returned to Paris, where he found old friends and new acquaintances in the studio building known as the "Tea-Chest." It was No. 70 Rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs, and was ornamented on the exterior with Chinese designs. There were, among others, Gérôme, Hamon, Toulmouche and Brion, and Gérôme's ape, Jacques, who sat at table with the rest in a child's high chair.

We have left ourselves little space in which to speak of Breton's own practice and principles, and, indeed, there is but little concerning them in the book. Still, a couple of chapters toward the end are made up of precepts, some of which we shall give later. The last chapter is devoted to the Exhibition of the Great Paintings of the Century at the Champ des Mars in 1889. Ingres, Rousseau, Delacroix, Gustave Moreau, he thinks were badly represented; Charlet, Jean Gigoux, Millet, Troyon, on the contrary, well.

"La Vie d'un Artiste" is a book for every one to read, a book to place alongside of Fromentin's "Le Sahel" and "Le Sahara." We are happy to be able to say that a complete English translation is about to be brought out by Messrs. D. Appleton & Co.

## TO PEN DRAUGHTSMEN.

SINCE the publication of our articles on Pen and Ink Drawing, we have had many applications requesting us to recommend competent artists for various commissions. To be of mutual service in the matter we have decided to examine any specimens sent us by *competent* pen and ink draughtsmen, and enter the names and addresses of those whose work is considered satisfactory for future recommendation. No students or inferior craftsmen need apply; but to good illustrators we can probably introduce buyers. Each specimen sent for approval must be accompanied with stamps for return.

## HINTS ON MINIATURE PAINTING.



The ivory comes from the dealer, its yellowish tone is usually too strong for the purposes of the miniature painter. It is bleached by the application of slight heat. In summer, exposure to the sun's rays is sufficient. In winter, a mild fire or steam heat is necessary. As the ivory warps when heated on one side, it is necessary to turn the other occasionally, and care must be taken that the heating process is not carried too far, as the ivory would finally lose all transparency, and become brittle and dull as a burnt bone.

\* \* \*

A CAREFULLY-HONED razor is used to bring the surface of the sheet of ivory to the proper condition for painting on. The plaque is scraped diagonally from corner to corner, and then in the opposite direction, until an even and extremely fine polish is attained. Some prefer for this purpose a scraper of glass, chosen from among the fragments of a broken window-pane. The piece of glass should be curved like a scimitar, very sharp and with an even edge which will make no marked furrows on the ivory. After scraping, the ivory must have its polish taken off by being rubbed with finely-powdered charcoal applied with a pad of soft paper. A camel's-hair brush will remove every trace of this powder. Should the ivory be touched with the fingers or with any greasy substance after it is so prepared, it will be necessary to go over the spot with a small paper stump and the powder to reduce it to the same condition as the rest.

\* \* \*

THE studio furniture of a miniaturist has its little peculiarities. In the first place, he works not at an easel, but at a desk, which should have a very even top, and be neatly covered with baize or velvet. On this, his miniature is pinned with drawing tacks while he works at it. To prevent his ivory getting soiled he covers it, as wood-engravers do their blocks, with a thin sheet of paper lightly gummed to the under edges. A steady north light is requisite. One should sit quite comfortably, neither too high nor too low, and not bend over the work, as that throws the weight of the body on the wrist and detracts much from the lightness of touch which is so necessary. For similar reasons too much care cannot be taken with the brush-handles. When the handle does not just suit the fingers, the right touch will always be missed, and the degree of precision of touch which is absolutely necessary in miniature painting is incredible to those used only to working on a larger scale.

\* \* \*

IN general, the requirements of a miniaturist are those of a water-color painter, only that the most exquisite neatness is required. The brushes must come to an irreproachable point, the water-glasses must be newly rinsed before commencing work each time, and the brushes and palettes perfectly cleaned at the end of each day's work. There should be a palette of ivory and one of faience. The scraper, the magnifying glass and the box of pounce powder complete the list of objects peculiar to the miniaturist's studio.

\* \* \*

MINIATURE COLORS are always improved by being re-ground with gummed water. For the flesh tints two palettes are necessary, one of pigments carrying but little gum with which to do all the first painting and carry the portrait forward as far as possible in its masses. The other set, mixed with a greater allowance of gum, is for the finishing touches. An ounce of the best white gum arabic is dissolved in a teacup full of warm, distilled water, and a little sugar candy is added to make the gummed water required. It is kept in a glass-stoppered bottle.

\* \* \*

THE palette for miniature painting of Professor The not is as follows: Chinese white, ochre de rue, yellow ochre, Sienna, gold ochre, burnt Sienna, vermilion, red ochre, madder red, rose madder, violet of gold, Cologne earth, bistre, sepia, Mars brown, Mars bistre, ultramarine, *indigo*, lamp-black. These for the flesh and hair; for backgrounds and accessories he uses *red orpiment*,

*yellow orpiment* (these he marks "very poisonous"). We would replace them with orange and yellow cadmium, Naples yellow, *gamboge*, cobalt, emerald green and *Prussian blue*. Several of these pigments—those in istics—cannot be considered permanent under ordinary conditions, but miniatures are not to be exposed to ordinary conditions. They must be preserved carefully from the air under glass, and must be kept from the sunlight and from moisture.

\* \* \*

THE pencil sketch traced from a careful drawing or from a photograph is always gone over on the ivory with a fine brush and colors to correspond with the local tones. The violet of gold is used for outlining the flesh; ultramarine or cobalt for the drawing of white draperies. This work should be done from nature, and should be in the nature of an improvement on the first sketch or tracing from photograph.

\* \* \*

SOME miniaturists place under the flesh parts of a portrait a thin plaque of gold or gilt copper, the painting over which takes quite a different appearance of solidity and animation from that of the draperies and background done on the ivory. For portraits of women and children, when the flesh tints are extremely white and rosy, silver is used instead of gold. Of course the metal is completely covered down, the effect being due to its opacity; but very fine points or lines may be brought out by a skilful use of the scraper, to imitate the glistening of the eyes or the glitter of light on fair hair. Even the oil painters of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries used the metallic background for the heads of their portraits for the sake of these effects.

## PORTRAIT PAINTING.

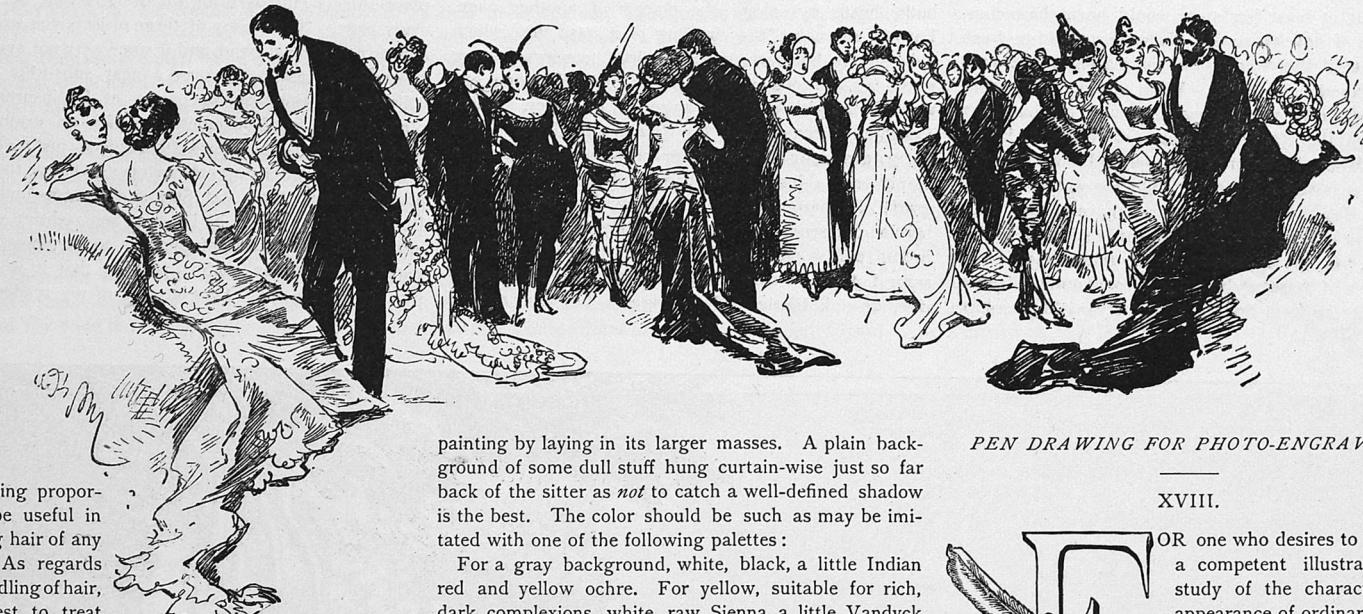
## IV.—SECOND PAINTING CONCLUDED—FINISHING.

OME advice was given in our third article concerning the second painting of particular features, the eyes, nose, mouth and ears. We have now, before proceeding to the finishing work, to say how the hair, neck, shoulders and arms (in a lady's portrait) and the hands should be treated, and to add a few words about dress and background.

There are but two points about the hair on which it will be necessary to dwell. The most essential, and that which amateurs are most likely to forget, is that its light and shade must not be treated as that of a mass separate or separable from the rest of the head. To fail in this point is to insure that the hair will have the look of a wig, and a badly arranged wig at that. Take the extreme case of a person with a clear, pale complexion and black hair; even in this case the head must be treated as one mass. Though we here, for the sake of clearness, speak of the several features separately, the painter must not so think of them; he must think of all while concerned with each in turn. It will greatly help him if he will observe that the effect of light is one for the entire head; it has its shade side and its light side, broken only by the prominent features and the masses of the hair, and uninterfered with by the disposition of the colors. The same principle holds good for all the features; there is no distinct system of light and shade for lips, or cheeks or brow, any more than for the hair; but it is so obvious as regards these that we have not before deemed it necessary to mention it.

The other matter which beginners are apt to find surprising is the variety of colors in the hair. Whatever the general tone, black or brown, or auburn, or fair, or gray, a palette as rich as or richer than that required for the flesh will be found indispensable. There is generally a considerable variety of local hues, in brown and auburn hair especially; the lights are often so cold as to require an admixture of blue; the reflections are numerous and positive, and under any loose masses will be found transparent tones of surprising warmth and richness. Then about the forehead, ears and neck, and the line, or lines of parting the color of the skin shows blended with that of the hair, and the resulting gradations must be carefully given. Altogether it will be found that the following palette (which is general) does not contain too many colors: black, white, yellow ochre, raw and burnt Sienna, light red, cobalt. Tints produced from two or three of these mixed together will,





PEN DRAWING FOR PHOTO-ENGRAVING.

in varying proportions, be useful in painting hair of any color. As regards the handling of hair, it is best to treat it in masses. If you use a brush the bristles of which have begun to spread at the ends you will obtain sufficient looseness of texture without paying particular attention to it. Some of the old masters, Leonardo da Vinci especially, who loved to paint a fine curling head of hair, put in the broad masses first and drew the stray hairs over them with sweeps of a fine brush dipped in liquid color. The light curls of a child's head can hardly be properly rendered otherwise; but, simple as the work seems in Leonardo's pictures, it requires the hand of a master. The same method used by painters of second rate, as, for instance, by most well-known miniaturists, gives results which are hardly satisfactory.

As a rule, in the portrait of a lady the throat and neck require the most delicate grays at the painter's disposal. These are harmonized with the warmer and lighter tints of the face by the intervention of the warm shadow under the chin and the reddish and broken tones about the ears and at the roots of the hair. These will have to be carefully reproduced and insensibly blended with the clearer tones of the neck and bosom. The collar-bone and the large muscles of the neck should have been well drawn in the first painting. The local tones, compounded of white, yellow, light red, cobalt and terre verte, will be brushed with a large and free stroke over this drawing, allowing it to show through in the shaded parts, and as much as possible with a horizontal stroke. Do not be afraid to show the bone and tendons too prominently. They can easily be subdued in the finishing painting, and they are often very characteristic. The arms and hands are commonly of the same tone as the general tone of the face, and may be painted with the same palette. It is hardly necessary to say that the hands demand all the painter's skill. Next to the feet, the beginner finds them the most difficult portion of the human anatomy—far more difficult than the head. If he is conscientious he is likely to give them too much importance, but it is better he should do so than attempt in any way to slight them.

The background may or may not be put in at the second painting. If much dependence is placed on the finishing work, it had better not be finally treated until at the beginning of that stage. But the dress must be painted along with the arms and bust. We would strongly advise the beginner and the amateur to insist on a simple, even severe costume. Any elaborate work on the part of the picture is sure to injure the effect of the flesh painting. Fine gradations here, as of silk or satin, will make the flesh look coarse; rich ornamentation will make the painter's work elsewhere look sketchy and unfinished. If such is worn, it must be indicated in the most summary manner; and to do this effectively requires more skill than amateur or beginner is likely to have. A quiet, becoming dress can be carefully and satisfactorily painted without competing in interest with the face or other exposed parts of the figure. A dull surface is much preferable to a lustrous one, and a material that makes large and soft folds to one whose folds are sharp and numerous.

We have taken it for granted that the background will not have been touched during the second painting. It will then be in order to commence the finishing

painting by laying in its larger masses. A plain background of some dull stuff hung curtain-wise just so far back of the sitter as *not* to catch a well-defined shadow is the best. The color should be such as may be imitated with one of the following palettes:

For a gray background, white, black, a little Indian red and yellow ochre. For yellow, suitable for rich, dark complexions, white, raw Sienna, a little Vandyck brown. For olive (fair complexions), terre verte, Naples yellow, black and white. Brown, suitable for auburn-haired persons, black and burnt Sienna.

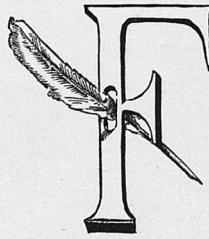
The light and shade of the background will have been given in the first painting with some warm brown, as burnt Sienna, with, perhaps, the addition of a hint or two of the local tones in the lights. The painter will now begin by matching the darker tones. Then, more carefully imitating the color of the lights, he will bring both together by intermediate tones applied so that each touch overlaps a little the preceding one. The whole of the background may thus be finished at a sitting, and it should at once throw out the head and figure in full relief, clear up the flesh tints, and show distinctly where further work is needed on the main subject. It is well to arrange the background so that the darker parts of the dress and the hair come against the dark parts of the background and the lights against the light parts. This conduces to breadth of effect, and since background to the flesh will be managed on the opposite principle of contrast, their full value will be given to these, the most important parts of the painting.

The background finished, or, at least, fully colored, and the head well brought out in relief, it will be seen where certain tones fail to blend, where gradations are lacking, where a light or a dark accent is needed. The painting should not be oiled out at this stage, and the softening touches must be given with opaque color, not with glazes. Scumbling will be used wherever the tones already laid need but a slight modification. The lights may be retouched if necessary with solid color. Whenever greater definition is called for both the darks and the lights may be reinforced, the former with a touch or a line of transparent color, the latter with a little solid pigment. The corners of the eyes, the eyebrows, the parting of the mouth, the nostrils, the line of the jaw and chin, the ears, any dark partings of the hair will first be attended to. The high lights on eyes, nose, lips and chin will then claim consideration. It will be understood that these vary in tint as well as in brilliancy. A different tint will have to be mixed for each touch, so that these may harmonize with the parts to which they belong. The minute and firm touches required in finishing the mouth and eyes are best given with a pointed sable brush. Other small touches may be given with a small flat ox-hair tool. In scumbling the brush should be carried over the lines of the first and second painting. On it depends whatever degree of fineness of texture and roundness of forms may be desired. There is practically no limit to the extent to which it may be carried; but as each touch must be allowed to become dry before another is laid over it, high finish of this sort takes much time. It is, however, the only means which we can recommend to the amateur. To blend or soften the second painting while the paint is wet with the badger-hair brush used by some professional portrait painters is too apt to result in muddy tones and loss of expression.

R. JARVIS.

[In concluding the present series of articles on Portrait Painting, we take occasion to say that we have in preparation a new, very practical series of lessons illustrating, with colored and other plates, the various methods employed by some of the most distinguished American portrait painters.—ED. A. A.]

#### XVIII.



OR one who desires to become a competent illustrator, the study of the character and appearance of ordinary things in every-day life develops to a great degree his power of observation. No study is more beneficial in this way than that of people one meets. One illustration will suffice. My attention was called to the fact by a sculptor. Ask a novice to draw the picture of a giant, and he will begin by sketching an enormous head, to which he will attach an extraordinarily high figure; but an artist will draw a massive figure surmounted by a small head. There are fifty little things of this kind, which, if space allowed it, I could show you where mistakes would occur in mere construction, from the lack of knowledge of the character of things, no matter how good a draughtsman the artist might be. Let a student practise drawing children or cupids for a week or two. Make a group as best you are able without much forethought; then study up the subject in anatomy; learn from Dr. Rimmer's book how the figures are to be put in with nothing but a series of curves; study photographs from Raphael's drawings, and see if at the end of your investigation you cannot find in your first work some grievous mistakes. Probably you have made the heads, and the faces in relation to these heads, half the size they should be; the limbs too large, and have introduced straight lines where curves should be. Then try some studies of typical heads suggesting contentment, discontentment, enjoyment, disappointment; make the smiling face, the face expressing grief, laughter, anguish; the face expressing fine mental qualities; the head of an idiot; the head of a child, of a youth, of a middle-aged person. There are little points in connection with these that you would never notice though you lived a hundred years, without having them pointed out to you; and yet when you once learn the philosophy of expression, you see daily verifications of the laws you have studied. Duval's "Anatomy" and Darwin's "Philosophy of Expression" are books which will initiate you into this study. Again, take the action of a figure; there are many young draughtsmen who can draw a standing figure and a seated figure tolerably well, but let them try to represent the human form in its manifold positions of action, and you will see how they will fail utterly. Try to illustrate Longfellow's "Excelsior" or "Hiawatha" or some battle poem, and before you have half finished, you will be utterly disgusted at your limited knowledge of anatomy and your inability to give the proper expression of action to the figures or draw them in correct proportion. I shall have much to say later as to how to overcome these difficulties.

As I have remarked before, if you would train yourself to be an illustrator, it is a profitable habit to study the character of every-day objects. A reader for a publishing house said to me recently: "How strange it is that the literary tyro will not confine himself to scenes of which he is cognizant, but is ever anxious to depict the foreign and the unfamiliar! It was only yesterday that I had a manuscript from the wife of an American missionary, who had been stationed in the island of Jamaica. I knew her to be a woman of keen observing powers, and expected she would portray the life in Jamaica so

vividly that at least her story would have the recommendation of novelty, so that its scenes would be fresh and graphic, if they were not as fascinating as the work of more experienced hands. What was my disappointment, on glancing over its pages, to find its characters drawn from the English nobility and its scenes laid in England, where I am sure the writer had never been."

A similar mistake is apt to tempt the would-be illustrator to disaster. For while, as I have already said, the attempt to depict purely imaginary incidents is most advisable, yet one must not forget that many of the details even of these can be studied from familiar objects. Do not let the form and character of anything escape

bulls' heads ran along the margin of another page. Farther on came the drawing of a vase into which ballots were being thrown; a pair of trousers, floating in the air, adorned another page; on a following one was a ballet girl holding a large pair of scales. Then, a cushion with a cross of the "Legion of Honor" upon it, an arm-chair with a spider crawling on its seat, a maple leaf, a bar of music, a legal document, a program, the hero fighting a duel with a lobster, the heroine dressed in rags sweeping the street with a large broom, and so on. In the decorative work that framed several portraits were embodied some books, a tambourine, an ink bottle, a bird cage, a hat box and an

place objects employed for the designs that decorated every page. Now, many of these objects you would be able to find near at hand, and if some were not available, it would be easy to discover a near substitute—a tax collector's notification, or papers of fire-insurance, in place of the legal document, to pick an example at random from the list of possible subjects just given.

Some few winters ago the subject given for the Composition Class at the Art Students' League (under Mr. Blashfield's direction, if I remember rightly) was an arm-chair. A drawing of this was to be placed on the paper or canvas in such a position that it would be pleasing to the eye. Now let any of my readers who



TAPESTRY PAINTING: "THE SEASONS." AFTER BOUCHER. "AUTUMN."

(FOR DIRECTIONS FOR TREATMENT, SEE PAGE 122.)

you. Sooner or later in your career you may have occasion to introduce conspicuously in a composition the most humble object in your house. I picked up the other day a brochure containing the libretto of a French comic opera, illustrated by a quantity of humorous vignettes, and I was struck by the large number of commonplace objects which figured as prominent "motives" for the principal designs. For instance, a large pair of shears, with a few objects behind them, made up the heading for one act; on the opposite page quill pens were arranged decoratively; the next had the device of a large butterfly; another contained nothing more than the drawing of a simple basket; a design made up of

umbrella stand. To have completed its designs you would have had to know how to draw portraits of all the above objects, and also those of a pocket-book, an umbrella, footlights, a crow, a glass with a spoon in it, a lamp-post, a geographical globe, a pumpkin, a watering pot, a cabbage, a small table at a café, cobble-stones, the keyboard of a piano, sheets of music, a napkin, a fork, a harp, a pair of shoes, a washstand, a candle, a bottle of eau-de-cologne, a microscope, a retort, a bicycle, a hand-bag, a prompter's box at a theatre, a sign post, a card with the ace of hearts, a skull, some statuettes, a coffee pot, a fan, a pair of sabots, and many others almost without limit—so cleverly were common-

are following out the suggestions I am giving in *The Art Amateur* set themselves such lessons and make simple designs of some of the things from the above list, arranged so that they might be used for head or tail-pieces, initial letters or vignettes in book illustration.

ERNEST KNAUFFT.

IN answer to many inquirers, we would say that Professor Knaufft's articles on Pen Drawing for Illustration will be continued in *The Art Amateur* during the coming year. A new series of articles treating of Free Hand Drawing, with special reference to the needs of schools and teachers, will be commenced very shortly.

*A PLASTER CAST FROM THE HAND.*

THE magazine writer said : " You can very easily take a plaster cast of a hand or foot, and when the simple process is complete have an artistic addition to your studio."

It was summer ; the college halls were deserted, but the studio was cool and shady, and the artist, left alone as its occupant, decided to amuse herself by taking a few plaster casts for use next winter.

The first thing to do was to buy ten pounds of plaster-of-Paris at the drug-store, and the next to procure a model. The artist's family contained a maiden who volunteered the use of her hand in making the first mould. So, one

that never was any good in its proper sphere, while water enough to make a rather stiff mixture was poured on. Then the contents of the bowl were emptied over the hand of the victim, which had first been coated with sweet oil.

" My ! " said she, " it's awfully cold," and looked anxiously at the artist. " Oh, that's all right ; it'll set in a minute." And so it did. Just then, tramp, tramp, down the hall, singing—

" Oh Italia, Italia, beloved —"

came the musical genius, ready to turn critic and adviser. With his hands under his coat-tails, he surveyed the first gentle efforts to extricate the victim's hand.

was tucked back in the first mould, both mould and hand were oiled with linseed-oil, while the critic mixed up the plaster, which at this point unexpectedly began to stiffen ; the water gave out, and by the time more was brought it was necessary to mix what the victim called " a whole new batch." After this was poured over the palm and heaped up well, the victim complained of the heat in the first mould covering the back of the hand.

The artist may have felt uneasy, but she concealed all signs of doubt, even when the halves of the mould refused to separate. The critic suggested that an axe might knock them apart. The victim looked alarmed. Patience at last loosened the parts by gentle means,



TAPESTRY PAINTING : "THE SEASONS." AFTER BOUCHER. "WINTER."

(FOR DIRECTIONS FOR TREATMENT, SEE PAGE 122.)

afternoon, the artist, with the plaster under her arm and the victim beside her, walked up the hill to the college. The studio did not afford much to help her ; but a big water jug was filled at the well and, to mix the plaster in, a punch-bowl pressed into service. When the victim put her pretty little hand on the marble slab that was hunted up for the purpose, it was found that there was open space under it ; so some pottery clay, with which the artist had been trifling, was poked under and around the hand until it presented a surface that was sufficiently flat to lift easily out of a mould. Then about a quart of plaster was put into the punch-bowl and stirred vigorously with a stiff bone palette knife,

" Ow ! Ow ! Oh stop ! It's caught all the little hairs. Don't you touch it ; let me get it off, myself !" exclaimed she, with her brows in a pucker.

" I suspect," said the artist meditatively, " we ought to have used some other oil ; olive-oil is so soon absorbed."

" Can't you just yank 'em all out at once, and have it over ? I'll hold the mould," proposed the critic.

" Yank them ! don't you touch this mould. I'm getting them out slowly. There —"

The mould came off looking very well, only that the plaster seemed coarse and full of holes. The other side was to be made ; and this time, after the victim's hand

and the happy artist said to the relieved victim : " Now we'll take the cast."

So they tied the two parts of the mould together. There were more cracks between them than seemed desirable, but the plaster was poured in, and after it began to harden it stopped running out.

" I'm afraid," said the critic, " that mould will not come off the cast." It did not that day, nor the next, although there was much vain effort to break the halves apart ; but some days after, the victim herself, filled with curiosity, succeeded in chipping away the mould. But the thumb broke off in the process, and the cast was found to be full of small holes, stained yellow in

spots from the linseed-oil used on the mould, and otherwise unsatisfactory.

School reopened, and the artist had not decorated the studio with new casts, by any means. Slowly, by many experiments, and with some suggestions from a friendly dentist, she learned the right way, which is to sift the plaster slowly into a bowl of water, without stirring it at all, but, after allowing it to settle, to pour off the superfluous water and use the sediment, which will be of the right consistency and perfectly smooth for the impression. The hand should first be oiled thoroughly with castor-oil, and after the first half of the mould is taken, its edges must be trimmed smooth, that the second may fit snugly to it. The oil must be used freely on hand and mould. When both moulds are done, they need a thin coat of shellac, dissolved in alcohol, which will dry immediately. Then a light coat of oil should be given to the two sides before they are placed together. A piece of wire twisted into a loop, with the ends pressed into the soft plaster after the mould is filled, secures a useful means of hanging up the cast; which will prove smooth and white, and be easily separated from the mould, if awkward curves or angles have been avoided in taking it.

Try it, O enthusiastic reader! but remember—like many another thing—the taking of a plaster cast is perfectly simple—after you know how!

M. A. HARRIS.

WE gave particulars last month of an excellent fixative for charcoal and pastel drawings. There is sometimes no little difficulty in applying such, but a good old plan, which, however, requires some practice, is to take a thin piece of book muslin on a stretcher and put it over the drawing, which is to lie flat on a table, right side up. The brush dipped in the fixative is passed quickly and regularly over the muslin, which it penetrates in small drops sufficiently to fix the drawing.

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THE chief technical difficulty to be overcome by the novice in etching lies in the fact that the drawing must be reversed. The plate when covered by the "ground" ready for use is blackened by being smoked with the flame of a wax taper. In scratching through this ground with a sharp steel point, the bright copper is exposed by every stroke, and looks light against the dark ground. These lines, when "bitten" by the immersion of the plate in a nitric acid bath become black in the printing, while the parts protected by the ground remain white.

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IN etching it is easy to correct errors again and again if necessary, but a single proof, unless the drawing be very elaborate, will generally suffice to reveal at a glance all the shortcomings of the plate. When retouching, the original proof should be kept in view.

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As printing is not the work of the amateur but of a regular workman, we will only give such instructions as will enable the former to direct the operation to the result which he desired. These apply to the preparation and inking of the plate. The printer should first clean it with spirits of turpentine; then ink it evenly all over with a dabber; next, with coarse muslin, take off evenly so much of the ink as will enable the design to be clearly seen. With the palm of the hand he will make some parts clearer yet. The margins will be cleaned and lights taken out with whiting and a piece of chamois or rag. Then comes the operation of retroussage—that is, regaining full and soft blacks where required, by drawing the ink out of the lines with a wisp of very fine muslin. If perfectly white lights are desired, the work of taking them out should come last. The plate is then ready for the press. The paper is prepared by moistening with a sponge. If the paper is hard Holland or Whatman, it is well to soften the surface a little by passing over it, while wet, a stiff bristle brush, always in the one direction.

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THERE need be no difficulty about the printing if it be only amateur work. It can be done on any copper plate engraver's press. It is different in the printing of the work of professionals, who are very particular and entrust the "proving" of their plates only to expert printers of etchings. Some styles of printing, however, greatly assist the etcher; and a clever printer can interpret an etching, aided by the use of the wiping rag, in such a manner that a plain proof from the identical plate will hardly look like the work of the same hand; but this needs much artistic knowledge in the printer.

## China Painting.

LESSONS BY A PRACTICAL DECORATOR.

### IX.—ROYAL WORCESTER DECORATION (CONTINUED.)



THE greater number of vases, hair receivers, bonbon boxes, olive sets and similar articles offered for sale are made in this country and are called ware. They can be very easily distinguished from china by their color, which is not pure white, but creamy in tone, the glaze on

them being very much softer than that on china.

In buying a piece, unless the artist can tell the difference, the question should always be asked, "Is this ware or china?" It is a very important thing to know, for it makes a vast difference in the treatment of the decoration, as more can be done in one firing with the ware.

In selecting a piece always try to get one that is free, as far possible, from imperfections, by which I mean cracks, rough places that are perceptible to the touch, and little black spots or holes. Each piece must be carefully examined. It is always safest to put a background on the American ware, for there is a possibility of its turning a light gray when fired or being discolored in some way. I will except the fine Belleek wares made in Trenton. The matt wax or gouache colors are opaque, and will cover up any slight imperfection. The glaze is so soft on all these wares that it absorbs the colors; the Lacroix about one eighth, some of the lighter shades even more. Therefore, all the colors, no matter of what kind, should always be painted a little stronger, or the decoration may turn out weaker than intended, and so spoil the effect.

Our American wares have a great advantage over china from the fact that backgrounds on those can be laid on and dried, the design painted in and outlined with raised paste for gold, then dried again, the gold put on, and all done in one firing. I am speaking now of the gold and the paste which I have always used, and I know exactly how they will fire. I cannot say with any certainty that those employed by other persons can be treated in this way, but if they are first-class materials, I do not see why there should be any failure. Most amateurs have the mistaken idea, in using paste, that it is necessary to build it up as high as possible. No matter how rough and uneven it may look, if it is only high they are satisfied. I have seen roses outlined where the paste was put on in little lumps, no attempt being made to connect them. I would advise every student, who is unable to obtain the services of a competent teacher, before commencing this style of decoration, to go to some store where there are examples of Royal Worcester, Doulton or Crown Derby—any one of them will answer—and closely examine the workmanship. They will find that for all small decorations the paste is in very low relief, and the lines are smooth and even, most of them being as fine and delicate as a cambric needle. Of course it has taken time and patience to arrive at such a state of perfection; but that need not discourage the student. It should rather act as a stimulant. Our American women have so much determination and energy that they are often able to produce as good work in one year as foreign workmen do in two or three years of constant labor. A celebrated English teacher once said that he was sorry that he had ever given a lesson in America, for his pupils soon knew more than he did—they were so clever.

Most dealers in china paints keeps this paste for sale. A number advertise Hancock's paste, already prepared in little pans or tubes similar to moist water-colors, to be used with water. I know nothing about it beyond the advertisement, but if it fires and works as well as the paints of the same make, which I have used with success, I can see no reason why it should not be satisfactory. Being all ready to use, it would save both time and labor. Except in this instance of Hancock's preparation, the paste always comes in a dry powder, costing twenty-five cents per bottle.

Mix the paste on a clean palette. To as much paste as can be heaped on a twenty-five cent piece, add four

drops of fat oil. Mix with plenty of turpentine till very smooth and fine. Make it look about as the Lacroix colors do when ready for painting. If it is full of grains it will be in the same condition when fired and the gold will have the same rough appearance. Burnishing will not remedy it. It is very important, therefore, that it should be well ground, however tiresome the operation and hard on the hand. Cover it up and let it stand until ready to use. It will probably be rather hard and dry when uncovered, but will readily yield to the knife and plenty of turpentine. It should be a little thicker than ordinary paint. For fine work a very small brush should be used. If it spreads beyond the line, mix it up with the knife, breathe on it, and let it stand for a few moments for the turpentine to dry out. Go all over the design. If two pieces are being painted, by the time the second is finished the first will be dry enough for another coat. If necessary three coats can be given, for it shrinks a little in firing; but, as I said before, do not build it up too high. Care should be taken not to increase the size of the lines. If any of them have uneven edges take a sharp-pointed stick, moisten in a little water and smooth them off; then dry thoroughly in the oven. Do not put on one coat and dry it and then add another; for in some cases it may separate in firing. When dried it is ready for the gold. If it does not dry out hard and even, go over it with a thin coat, without any fat oil. It is always safe to apply two coats of gold.

It is rather difficult to know just how much paste will be required for a design. If any remains on the palette and it is free from lint, do not wipe it off, but put it away where it will be clean, and it can be used again and again, fresh paste being added to it as required. I often keep mine for months. It will sometimes grow fat by standing. In such a case turn a little alcohol over it and let it stand for a few moments. The oil will spread out toward the edge of the palette and the paste will dry out. Then mix with turpentine, and use as before.

The paste is prepared by some students with tar oil instead of fat oil. The former may work more freely, and as it answers the same purpose it is a matter of indifference which is used. If it becomes too fat do not use alcohol, but turpentine, to run off the fat oil.

If the paste is used on china and fired first and comes out with a glaze, it is almost impossible to cover it with gold. It is sometimes cheaper to put the article aside.

In decorating a hair receiver, if raised gold work is used, it can all be done in one firing, for the article in question is "ware." If a brush and comb tray is to accompany it, it will require two firings; for these trays, as a general thing, are china.

The gold should be used freely on the paste. It should have two coats in order to have a rich appearance and finish well.

It is not necessary to tint delicate china. The flowers can be painted with Lacroix colors, outlined and veined with the paster fired and then gilded; or the gouache colors can be used. If any of the flowers or leaves look weak they should be repainted for the second firing.

I saw recently a charming set of tea cups and saucers from the Minton factory. They were tinted with yellow ochre very delicately, giving the effect of an old ivory background. The decoration was a spray of hawthorn blossoms and leaves. The leaves and stems were done in red gold, the flowers in green gold, all outlined with paste; the handles were solid gold. If the handles of any article are of a fancy shape, two colored golds can be used, and so variety be given to the work.

Pansies, violets, maiden-hair or ferns of any kind look well with the raised outlines on a delicate background.

A tête-à-tête set would be effective tinted in dark yellow bronze with green gold and plantinum ferns. A pretty border might be made for the edge of single fern leaves connected with a dot, or joined on to each other. The ferns might be painted in bronze green and outlined with gold, with here and there a small silver fern. It is never advisable to use very much silver.

Bronze green merely clouded with gold, with a green and gold handle, if it be a cup or a jug so painted, is a simple but very pretty form of decoration.

M. B. ALLING.

AMONG the designs in color for china painting almost ready for publication is a charming cracker jar design by Mrs. Crosby, in the blue and gold style of decoration described in the present number by Miss F. E. Hall. We have other designs in color of Royal Worcester decoration by Mrs. Crosby quite as attractive as the examples published in our September and October numbers.

STUDIES  
BY  
MODERN  
ARTISTS.

JULES BRETON.

